

Islamic Republic of **I R A N**

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Reza Najafi
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran
to the United Nations and other International Organizations in Vienna
on Nuclear Disarmament and Security Assurances
At the Main Committee I of the 2015 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons
New York, 4 May 2015**

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to associate my delegation with the statement of the Non-Aligned Movement.

Global demand for nuclear disarmament has started on 24 January 1946, when the very first resolution of the first session of the General Assembly unanimously called for the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Therefore, nuclear disarmament is a 70-year old strong global demand. Since the entry into force of the Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1970, it is also a 45-year old explicit legal obligation under its article VI. After indefinite extension of the Treaty in 1995, there is also a set of decisions and action plans adopted by the successive Review Conferences of the Treaty during the past 20 years.

Now, the point is that where do we stand in terms of the number and destructive power of nuclear weapons worldwide? Is our present world more secure or more dangerous than that of the past?

Current facts and figures and realities suggest that during the past 70 years, not only the demand for nuclear disarmament was not declined, but, quite the opposite, it has severely been heightened. The recent intensified international efforts, represented, in part, in the first ever high-level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, on 26 September 2013, and the three conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, in 2013 and 2014, suggest that this demand continues to be pursued with determination and strong resolve.

The increase in the number of States parties to the non-proliferation Treaty is of



course a great achievement. However, its failure in gaining the universal characteristic remains a serious challenge to its effectiveness. As “zero” is called as “the only safe number of nuclear weapons on the planet”, indeed, “zero is the only acceptable number of countries outside the non-proliferation Treaty”.

Even though the incomplete, selective and discriminatory implementation of the Treaty provisions is considered one of its challenges that needs to be effectively addressed, its main implementation challenge, however, is the lack of real progress in the fulfillment of nuclear disarmament obligations under article VI, by all the nuclear-weapon States, and the breach, by certain nuclear-weapon States, of their nuclear non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty, represented, inter alia, in their nuclear-weapon-sharing policies and their direct or indirect assistance to countries outside the Treaty to develop nuclear weapons.

Likewise, lack of substantive progress in the implementation of the 1995 resolution and decisions, the 13 practical steps and the 2010 action plan on nuclear disarmament are other sources of concern which has regrettably deepened the already existing frustration of the non-nuclear-weapon States about the lack of political will on behalf of the nuclear-weapon States for fulfilling their legal obligations under article VI and their unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

According to the latest estimates, today there exist more than 17,000 nuclear weapons worldwide. This means, quantitatively, they are nearly 76 percent less than the Cold War peak of around 70,000 warheads in the mid-1980s. However, this is only one part of the fact. One should also take into account the following facts:

- 1) Most of the reduced warheads have only been moved from operational status to various reserve, inactive, or contingency categories, and thus, due to lack of transparency most of 125,000 nuclear warheads that have been built since 1945, continue to exist and actually have not been dismantled;
- 2) The yield of nuclear weapons has been increased from kilotons to megatons - through replacing of Atomic bombs (A-bombs) with Hydrogen bombs (H-bombs) which are thousands of times more destructive than them – as a result of which most of the existing nuclear weapons would explode with a force roughly 8 to 100 times larger than the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. So, it is hardly acceptable to argue that, qualitatively, the destructive power of current nuclear weapons is less than that of the Cold War era;
- 3) Despite reduction efforts by certain nuclear-weapon States, regrettably, all nuclear-weapon possessors continue to modernize or upgrade their nuclear weapon arsenals, and certain nuclear-weapon States have plans to develop new types of such weapons;
- 4) According to the latest information released, the role of nuclear weapons in the military concepts and doctrines has not been diminished;
- 5) Development of new types of tactical nuclear weapons reduces the threshold for their use and increases the possibility of their use;

- 6) Contrary to the explicit obligations under articles I and II of the Treaty, nuclear-weapon-sharing between the nuclear-weapon States themselves or between them and non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty continues to exist, which, by actual proliferation of nuclear weapons seriously undermine the object and purpose of this Treaty and challenge its effectiveness and credibility;
- 7) Current negative security assurances are very limited, conditional, insufficient, and above all, can justify the use of such weapons by resorting to such concepts as “defending the vital interests” of a nuclear-weapon State or its “allies and partners”;
- 8) Above all, in our view, the main challenge of nuclear disarmament is the lack of genuine political will by the nuclear-weapon States to fulfil their legal obligations under article VI and implement their unequivocal undertakings to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals.

Mr. Chairman,

The persistence of this situation, with no doubt, will add to already existing frustration of the non-nuclear-weapon States, gradually erode the validity and credibility of the Treaty, lessen its effectiveness and negatively impact the international peace and security, which certainly is not in the common interest of the present and future generations.

Achieving nuclear disarmament as the fundamental objective of the Treaty is of essential importance. Taking into account the current implementation status of the obligations on nuclear disarmament under the Treaty and final documents and action plans of its Review Conferences, the 2015 Review Conference, should take concrete actions to rectify this situation, so as to stop the ever-deepening frustration of the non-nuclear-weapon States, prevent the continuous erosion of the Treaty’s credibility, and end the situations undermining the effectiveness of this important instrument.

To this end, the Islamic Republic of Iran, while fully supporting the recommendations made by the Non-Aligned States parties to the Treaty, proposes, in its national capacity, the following elements for their incorporation into the final report of the Committee:

“To reaffirm that taking all necessary practical measures for the total elimination of all nuclear weapons worldwide, including to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects under strict and effective international control, is a legal obligation to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI of the Treaty;

“To confirm the continued validity of the unequivocal commitments under the 13 practical steps and the 2010 action plan on nuclear disarmament, until all their objectives are achieved, while underlining that the lack of practical progress on the fulfillment of obligations under article VI and the aforesaid undertakings and commitments cannot continue

indefinitely, and therefore their implementation should be time bound, defined by taking into account the long delay in the implementation of such obligations and commitments and the urgent need for their full and immediate fulfillment;

“To confirm that all States parties undertake to urgently commence the negotiations, in the Conference on Disarmament, for the early conclusion of a comprehensive convention on nuclear weapons to prohibit their possession, development, production, acquisition, testing, stockpiling, transfer, use or threat of use and to provide for their destruction, as called for by the United Nations General Assembly resolutions 68/32 and 69/38;

“To acknowledge the momentum on nuclear disarmament, created, inter alia, by the first ever high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, on 26 September 2013, and the three conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons, in 2013 and 2014, and **to call** for more broad and active participation of States parties in the annual meetings of the General Assembly on the occasion of the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons and the upcoming conferences on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons;

“To reaffirm that “the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament” in 2018, the convening of which has been decided by the United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/32, provides the international community of States with a valuable opportunity to review the progress made in nuclear disarmament and make concrete decisions to advance the objective of a nuclear-weapon-free world, and accordingly, **to urge** all States parties to participate actively and at the highest possible level in that high-level international conference;

“To urge the United Nations high-level international conference on nuclear disarmament to consider, as a high priority, the adoption of a deadline for the total elimination of nuclear weapons worldwide;

“To invite the States parties to take additional appropriate measures in further mobilizing the international efforts towards nuclear disarmament, in particular on 26 September of every year as the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons;

“To confirm the commitment of all nuclear-weapon States for taking concrete measures for diminishing and ultimately excluding completely and no later than 2020, the role of nuclear weapons in their military and security doctrines, concepts and policies, so as to ensure that, by then, there is no nuclear weapon in operational status;

“To confirm also the commitment of all nuclear-weapon States to cease completely

and no later than 2020, all plans aimed at upgrading and refurbishing their existing nuclear weapon systems and their means of delivery, developing new types of nuclear weapon systems and constructing any new facility for the development, deployment and production of nuclear weapons and their means of delivery at home and abroad;

“To underline, once again, the importance of applying the principles of transparency, irreversibility and international verifiability in all activities of nuclear-weapon States related to the fulfillment of their obligations on nuclear disarmament and the implementation of their unequivocal commitments to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals, and to decide to consider, in the 2020 Review Conference, as a high priority, the establishment of a robust international mechanism for the verification of the fulfillment of nuclear disarmament obligations by the nuclear-weapon States.”

Mr. Chairman,

While my delegation stands ready to constructively cooperate with you and other delegations to agree on a substantive document, in conclusion, I should stress that my delegation would seriously insist on having a time frame for the implementation of any possible decision or action plan on nuclear disarmament.

I thank you Mr. Chairman.